MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT

February 26, 2003

Key Tasks, Events & Milestones

Requirements Status – Good progress continues on development of the business and system requirements for the FPA Preparedness Module. The FPA project is using the Unified Modeling Language (UML) approach to system development. The first iteration in the UML lifecycle is business requirements definition. The business requirements definition is divided into two phases.

Phase One produced a conceptual framework for the FPA Preparedness Module and contains a use case model that describes the business processes and a data model that depicts the major data tables. Phase one was completed January 31, 2003. A document containing the results of this phase has been published and provided to the FPA Core Team. When the RFP proposal period is over, these results will be posted on the FPA web site (fpa.nifc.gov).

Phase Two of the requirements definition has begun. The use cases and data models developed in phase one are being modified and refined to include greater resolution of detail. Ultimately this phase will produce a "storyboard" of the system. During Phase Two, the results of the requirements definition will be entered into Popkin System Architect, the CASE (Computed Aided System Engineering) tool chosen as the repository for the FPA system requirements.

Design & Build Contract – A key project milestone is beginning the contract task order to design and build the FPA Preparedness Module. A draft Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued January 3. We received 32 comments and questions on the Draft RFP. These were incorporated into the final RFP. The final RFP was issued on January 24. We received 46 questions from the contractors on the RFP. We formally responded to these questions by February 14.

We are expecting 8-12 proposals on February 28. We will begin the evaluation of these proposals the week of March 10 and are hoping to award the task order around April 7.

Up to this point we have been hitting all the key milestones for this contract task order.

USDA Select Phase Package - On Thursday, February 13, we received a *draft* memo from the USDA OCIO requesting submission of the FPA CPIC Select Phase Package by Tuesday, February 18. The FPA team successfully assembled and submitted this package by the Department's deadline.

The Select Phase Package includes:

- OMB A-11 Exhibit 300
- Introduction and brief overview of the investment
- Mission Needs Statement
- Acquisition strategy
- Initial project plan with estimated costs listed for each work breakdown structure (WBS)

- CBA and budget estimate, including risk-adjusted ROI and net present value (NPV) calculations
- Risk Plan
- Security Plan
- Performance Goals
- Architecture, including IT accessibility for persons with disabilities (Section 508)
- Telecommunications Plan
- Secretarial priority.

While only outlines of the security plan, architecture and telecommunications plans were submitted, we are confident the USDA OCIO will accept and approve our package. We received feedback from a reviewer who told us, "I've reviewed a lot of these, and this is one of the most complete packages I've seen."

Capital Planning & Investment Control (CPIC) is the process by which USDA makes decisions about information technology to invest in. The CPIC process is divided into 4 phases: Pre-Select, Select, Control and Evaluate.

The Select Phase is where a decision is made to "select" the project for budgeting and portfolio management purposes. A project must be "selected" in order to be approved for the Control Phase. The control phase is where actual system development occurs. During the control phase, agencies monitor performance and exercise "control" over the project.

Assessment of Alternative Approaches - The Core Team has evaluated existing fire planning system models to determine which, if any, will meet the business requirements of the Fire Program Analysis System Preparedness Module (FPA-PM). Criteria such as optimization, multiple fire events, dynamic interaction between fireline production and fire growth, interaction between the Preparedness Module and the full FPA system, integration of fire management objectives, among others, were used to evaluate the models. None of the models exhibited all of the desired attributes, but concepts and portions of models may be considered for the final product.

The Core Team recommends that the business requirements analysis continue and that a contractor with extensive experience in optimization and fire simulation be chosen through the RFP process. The contractor can provide valuable information as to which attributes are feasible in the FPA-PM. A white paper describing the evaluation can be obtained by contacting the Core Team.

Core Team Status – Some key staffing actions have been recently accomplished:

- **BIA Representative –** A "cert" has been received for the BIA FPA Core Team member. A selection is expected to be made quickly.
- **Deputy Project Manager –** The BLM is working on a long term (24 month) detail for the Deputy Project Manager. Candidates for the FPA Deputy Project Manager will be pulled from the existing open continuous vacancy announcement for IT Project Managers that has been established by the BLM System Coordination Office (SCO).

FPA Project Office – The FPA project team is now completely moved in to their new office space at the BLM Idaho State Office (IDSO) in Boise. The FPA team is now co-located with the NWCG IRM Program Management Office (PMO), the IQCS project and the ROSS project.

The new FPA Project Office is located at 1387 South Vinnell Way, Boise, ID, 83709.

Communications Events

February 4, 2003	Briefing to DOI in Washington, DC
February 6, 2003	Briefing to OMB in Washington, DC
February 5, 2003	Briefing to Alaska Fire Service
February 12, 2003	Meeting with NWCG Program Management Office (PMO)
February 12, 2003	Briefing to BIA

Issues & Risks

Fire Management Objectives - A founding principle of the FPA System is that the analysis will be objective driven and performance based. In the FPA Business Model, an assumption exists that approved Fire Management Plans populated with fire management objectives are in place. Across all agencies there is a lack of quantitative performance based fire management objectives, derived in an interdisciplinary arena. This gap presents a huge risk to the timely completion of the Preparedness Module of the FPA-System.

Interagency Standards - Common standards are an important element of the FPA System. Currently there is no standard application for determining common staffing and related costs across all agencies. These standards will apply to the following program elements:

- Fire Resources (e.g. engines, crews, etc.)
- Program Leadership (national, regional, and state positions, local Fire Management Officers, Asst. Fire Management Officers, etc.)
- Administration/overhead/support
- New equipment acquisition
- Facilities acquisition

Developing these standards for analysis will require an interdisciplinary process to develop common rules and thresholds. Guidance for using these rules and thresholds will likely require establishment of new interdepartmental policies.

Common, Interagency Data Sources - Data retrieval will be necessary to run the model. The agencies currently utilize different reporting systems, data standards, and data repositories. Affected data includes:

- Fire suppression costs
- Stabilization costs
- Historical fire statistics
- Historical fire weather data

These data differences complicate the ability to run a single common analysis system. A crosswalk is needed to import data from existing systems. For the future, common data standards are essential.

Budgeting and Funding – In order to award the Design & Build task order funding must be in place. Limited carryover funds from FY'02 are available. If funding is delayed in FY'03, proceeding to system development by the Design & Build contractor may be delayed.

Also, DOI has slashed the FY'04 FPA budget by 50% from $3.0M to $1.5M. While there may be opportunities for the bureaus to make up some of that shortfall, this adds uncertainty and risk to the project.

New Model - The FPA Preparedness Module will be using an optimization approach to determine cost effective means of meeting multiple management objectives. Since this is a new approach, completing the formulation prior to awarding the Design & Build task order is critical. The project is working with Dr. Doug Rideout, Professor of Forest Economics at Colorado State University to develop this optimization model. We intend to host a review of this approach soon after the Design & Build task order award to validate this approach.

Technical Approvals and Oversight –USDA-OCIO is becoming much more involved in oversight and approval of all I.T. projects in general and FPA in particular. Additional documentation and oversight requirements will take significant effort. The direct cost to the FPA project will not be insignificant. The project may have underestimated the direct cost for completing these requirements. This could impact the ability of the Design & Build contractor to complete the Preparedness Module on time.